

Appl. No. 10/829,195
Amdt. Dated June 17, 2005
Reply to Office action of March 22, 2005

REMARKS

Claims 1-10 are pending in this application. The originally filed Claim 1 is amended to clarify the structure and function of the plurality of contact points provided by the contact area of the body. Claims 2-6 and 8-10 are amended to correct some idiomatic and grammatical errors. The amendments are supported by FIG. 2, FIG. 3C, [0033], and [0037]. No new matter has been added.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) over Ludwig '355

Claims 1-3 and 6-9 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Pat. 5,594,355 to Ludwig (Ludwig '355). More specifically, the Examiner alleges that all the claimed elements in Claims 1-3 and 6-9 are disclosed in US '355. However, after careful review of the cited prior art, Applicant respectfully submits that US '355 fails to teach or suggest the claimed invention because of fundamentally different principles and numerous different features between the claimed inventions and the cited prior art.

One exemplary claimed feature as represented by claim 1 is the body with a contact area so configured as to form a plurality of contact points to contact said at least one trace continuously when the contacting point on said at least one trace is worn out during testing. As explained in the Description (see [0027]), "as the trace is worn at a particular point, subsequent insertions of the DUT into the test socket will cause the probe to rotate slightly and contact another fresh, un-eroded point on the trace at another point of contact of the probe. This design of the present invention provides a plurality of such contact points and thus advantageously extends the useful life span of the both the probe and the PCB..." The Examiner alleges in his rejections to Claims 2 and 3 that Ludwig '355 in col. 6, lines 5-15 discloses the

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plurality of contact points as claimed in the present application. For the reasons below, Applicant respectfully submits that Ludwig '355 fails to teach or suggest the body with a plurality of contact points as claimed in the present invention because the claimed body is fundamentally different from the body (512) as disclosed by Ludwig '355.

As discussed, the body of the probe as claimed in Claim 1 provides a plurality of contact points so that the probe can maintain its contact with the trace when the trace at the contact points is continuously worn out, resulting in a prolonged life span of the probe and the PCB. In contrast, Ludwig '355 discloses that the contact area of the body is in the form of a fulcum so that the fulcum rocks or pivots on the trace of the load board. See, col. 6, lines 7-9. While it does mention that variations on the probe configuration illustrated will also work (See, col. 6, lines 15-16), it also states that "due to the rocking motion of the probe, no appreciable 'wiping action' occurs along the conductive area or trace. That is, the fulcum does not slide or rotate but rather rocks on the conductive trace (See, col. 6, lines 17-21)." This statement actually teaches away of any intention to use a probe that can rotate or slide on the trace. The claimed probe in Claim 1 of the present invention is provided with a plurality of contact points so that they can rotate or slide without losing its contact with the trace. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 1-3 and 6-9 are not anticipated or made unpatentable by Ludwig '355.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) in view of Ludwig '355 and Hilz '241

Claims 4-5 and 10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ludwig '355 and U.S.Pat. 4,841,241 to Hilz (Hilz '241). More specifically, the Examiner alleges that the extra elements in Claims 4-5 and 10 are disclosed in Hilz '241 and the

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combination of the elements from Ludwig '355 and Hilz '241 to reach
the claimed inventions in Claims 4-5 and 10 is obvious.


As discussed above, Ludwig '355 fails to teach the body
with a plurality of contact points as claimed in Claim 1. Therefore,
Applicant respectfully submits that, even if the non-permissible
combination of Ludwig '355 and Hilz '241 does occur, the combination
fails to yield the claimed invention in the present application.

Summary

In summary, Ludwig '355 and Hilz '241 fail to teach or
suggest the claimed inventions in Claims 1-10. Therefore, Claims 1-10
is not anticipated by Ludwig '355 or made unpatentable over Ludwig
'355 and Hilz '241.

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of
Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,
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